



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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BOARD OF FINANCE

ROBERT J. CLEMENTS
Chairman

RICHARD J. CLEARY
MARK A. JOYSE
BARRY C. PINTO
MICHAEL D. VARNEY
JOSEPH E. WEHR

BUDGET HEARING TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2008

Members Present: Robert Clements-Chmn, Richard Cleary, Barry Pinto, Michael Varney.

Members Absent: Mark Joyse, Joseph Wehr

Others Present: N. DiCorleto-Fin Officer, M. Stupinski-First Selectman, Sel. Miller, Prichard, Turner, P. Michaud-DPW Director, Sgt. Konieczny, D. Varney, P. Hany-EVAC, D. Davis-Emergency Mgmt, M. Contakis-Budget Advisory.

Chairman Robert Clements opened the hearing at 7:30 pm.

First Selectman Michael Stupinski presented the Board of Selectmen budget. He highlighted some of the larger increases in the budget. The largest increase is in the Probate Court which is not in the Town's control. The First Selectman's budget increase is largely due to salaries and awards for service. The Town Planner's budget change is a result of a correction. The Public Safety Fire Hydrants account increased 12% due to increase in water costs and hydrant numbers. The Public Works Dept. budget increases are due to increased costs for materials. The wage contract for the DPW was signed and settled today. The total increase for the DPW is 13%. The WPCA Maintenance budget increased and is offset by revenues.

Mr. Cleary asked why the Town Planner's budget has contracted services that have not been spent in several years. Mr. Stupinski told him that the \$10,000 is for shared zoning enforcement services and that it is still a goal of the department. After the Conservation and Plan of Development is completed, the new zoning regulations will have to be done and that will require funding. He also asked about the salary increases for Town Hall employees. Mr. DiCorleto stated that the figure is in the salary adjustment line item and it takes into account retroactive pay back to contract date.

Mr. Cleary asked about the dump fees. Mr. Michaud told him that regarding the Hartford dump closing, he is working with the garbage contractors through their proposals for dumping somewhere else. He feels that the tipping fee for bulky waste will be lower. He will have the figures for the Board of Selectmen at their April 7 meeting.

Mr. Michaud then told the Board of Finance that the gas and diesel costs that were used for the original budget are now higher and therefore this budget is already in a deficit. The budget figure for gas is \$2.51 and we are now paying \$2.95 and the diesel budget was \$2.85 and now paying \$3.25. Mr. DiCorleto will do a spread sheet by location with the increases.

Mr. Pinto asked about the high octane gasoline that is being purchased. Mr. Michaud stated that it is a mid-grade we are purchasing and that the vans run better on this octane. The small equipment also needs the higher octane. The difference in the price of the gasoline is \$.13 per gallon and the cost to install an additional gas tank would not be cost effective relative to this.

Mr. Turner asked if the heating oil accounts should be adjusted. Mr. Michaud stated that the Town is presently paying \$3.14/gallon. Mr. DiCorleto will do these adjustments also but he will wait until the end of April.

The Town Properties account has an increase in the computer account. This is to bring the account up to the actual figures. Mr. DiCorleto stated that the computer services for labor are \$75/hour and the Computer Company has all the Microsoft certifications. He feels this is the most cost effective way to do this rather than hiring in house.

Anthem BCBS insurance is on a calendar year basis and therefore, the Finance Officer has estimated the second half of 2008, which is also the first half of the town year 08-09. The agent starts negotiations in October for the year starting December 31. Mr. Clements encouraged the Finance Officer to negotiate for a lower price.

GASB is a new entry for post employment benefits resulting from the audit.

The GIS budget has not been spent entirely because this is a shared program with CRCOG which was delayed. The intent is to keep the funds in this budget and to update the maps.

The total for the entire selectmen's budget is an increase of 5.6%.

Mr. Varney asked about the Fire Marshal's report stating that he is not doing all the inspections he needs to be doing annually. He asked what the number is that he needs to do and what additional hours would be required to accomplish them. The First Selectman stated he would get that information but also stated that the significant increase in the budget is not affordable. Mr. Clements stated that he felt the Fire Marshal job is to prioritize.

Mr. Clements then asked Mr. Michaud about the proposal by the Emergency Services Committee to look into a tower to house their radio communication as well as selling space on it to others. Mr. Michaud stated that the cell tower that was going to be constructed was estimated to cost \$190,000. Mr. Turner stated that the Emergency Services Committee would be discussing the long range plan and cost at their Thursday night meeting.

Mr. Cleary then asked why we don't budget the Troopers overtime correctly. Sgt Konieczny told him that it is a revenue item that gets billed out to contractors.

MOTION (CLEARY) SECONDED (PINTO) AND PASSED TO ADJOURN THE HEARING AT 8:35 PM.

Submitted by 
Lori Smith, Clerk